



DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

CONTACT: OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
(916) 657-7202
(916) 657-8639 - FAX

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SAVINGS FAR OUTWEIGH COSTS OF FREEWAY TOW PROGRAM

SACRAMENTO – For every \$1 spent by the Freeway Service Patrol to repair disabled cars and tow them off California’s freeways, \$5 to \$8 is saved in gasoline costs and work time.

The Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) consists of a state-contracted fleet of private tow trucks supervised and managed by the California Highway Patrol to ease freeway congestion.

The tow trucks patrol 90 designated beats on urban freeways and either tow the disabled vehicle or get it moving again with a minor repair, tire change, jump start or gallon of gasoline. Service is performed at no cost to the motorist.

FSP’s \$5 to \$8 in benefits compared to the \$1 in public cost were calculated on conservative estimates of \$1.15 per gallon of gas consumed while cars sit in traffic jams and \$10 per hour in lost work time, according to CHP Commissioner D.O. Helmick. The cost/benefit figures were calculated in a joint Caltrans-University of California study.

“Cost savings and quick response time have led the CHP to consider expanding FSP to include non-commute hours and special high-traffic events, such as the Rose Bowl,” Helmick said.

In 1996, the FSP provided over 48,500 assists per month, an increase of nearly 12 percent over 1995.

The study revealed that 75 percent of motorists stranded in a disabled car on the FSP’s beats are assisted within 10 minutes, Helmick said.